

FMCSA Field Systems Group

TECHNICAL BULLETIN



Subject: Gateway Solo Laptop Weak Points
Distribution: All Federal users (Please distribute to State partners ASAP)
Date: March 31, 2000

Symptom(s): LCD Screen “Bleeding” or scratching. The damage appears to consistently occur approximately three inches from the top of the screen, and four to five inches in from the left or right edge of the screen.

Cause: The top outer case of the screen is flexible. The keyboard of the unit has a slightly raised and ridged horizontal area between the speakers and the bottom row of keys. The screen bleeding may be caused by the way the laptop is picked up. When the laptop is closed, and it is picked up by grasping the edge near the top latch, the back of the screen is depressed to the point where it may be pressing the screen against the raised area on the keyboard. If grasped too hard, the pressure may be enough to cause damage to the screen.

Resolution: When handling the laptop, do not grasp the top in the area of the ridges with other than minimum pressure.

Symptom(s): The small plastic latch holding the screen closed breaks.

Cause: If the latch is not slid back all the way to the right before raising the screen, the laptop latch can snap off. The latch will also break if the screen is closed too quickly or forcefully.

Resolution: Be careful to fully retract the latch when closing or opening the screen.

Symptom(s): Battery does not stay seated in laptop battery compartment.

Cause: The battery latch inside the battery compartment is broken.

Resolution: Caution should be taken when removing the laptop battery to avoid breaking the small plastic retaining tab inside the battery compartment. Before pulling the battery from the case, ensure that the latch is pulled completely back to the release position.

When inserting the battery into the case, be sure to guide the battery slowly until a locking “click” is heard. If the battery is inserted too quickly the latch will jam and break.

Symptom(s): The 3COM PCMCIA modem card external telephone jack breaks.

Cause: The 3COM PCMCIA modem card external telephone jack extends from the end of the card when in use. Although the extended jack is fairly strong in the lateral direction, it is weak in the vertical direction. Sheering forces causes by knocking the extended jack or pulling on a connected telephone line will break the connector.

Resolution: When the laptop is connected to a phone line, use caution to prevent putting lateral pressure on the modem card's extended telephone jack.

Symptom(s): The BJC-50 printer will not power up even though a power supply is connected.

Cause: The lock latch of the printer is in the "ON" position. In this position the printer will not power up.

Resolution: Place the lock latch in the "Off" position.

Symptom(s): The computer-to-printer cable connection on the BJC-50 is broken.

Cause: The computer-to-printer cable connection on the BJC-50 is unique to the printer. The connector on the printer end is small and thin and can easily be broken.

Resolution: Use caution when moving either the printer or the laptop to avoid over stressing and breaking the BJC-50 cable connection.